



**Tom Barrett**  
Mayor, City of Milwaukee

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**MAYOR BARRETT AND ROCK THE GREEN HIGHLIGHT ECONOMIC  
BENEFITS OF ENVIRONMENTAL LEADERSHIP AT EARTH DAY  
CELEBRATION**

**MILWAUKEE – (April 20, 2012)** – Mayor Barrett kicked off *Milwaukee's Earth Day Celebration* held outside City Hall today. The City's Office of Environmental Sustainability partnered with organizers of Rock the Green, the Midwest's near-zero waste music festival to produce the event. The festivities included announcements from each organization, as well as Mayor Tom Barrett and Alderman Robert Bauman, delivered from a solar-powered stage.

"Earth Day has always served as a reminder for us all to adopt green habits in our own neighborhoods, through acts like recycling or installing rain barrels in our homes," Mayor Barrett said. "We've also learned that we can improve economic conditions through environmental leadership."

The Mayor highlighted City programs that have reduced energy costs for manufacturers, commercial businesses and homeowners. "The win-win for our energy efficiency programs is that in addition to improving building performance and cutting operating costs, we're also seeing local hiring pick-up as companies reinvest savings into expansion or as local contractors begin to hire more employees to help meet the surging demand for energy efficiency-related jobs," Mayor Barrett said.

The Mayor has directed Milwaukee's Green Team to look at a range of initiatives like the Milwaukee Energy Efficiency program (Me2) to help improve Milwaukee's overall sustainability.

The city's Green Team, led by Matt Howard, director of the Office of Environmental Sustainability, will begin working with the community to develop a sustainability plan and strategic vision that improves Milwaukee's environmental quality, economic strength and social equity.

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“The city’s sustainability plan will align economic and environmental interests that improve quality of life for our citizens,” said Howard. “We want this strategic planning process to be community driven with ample opportunity for public input and partnering with Rock the Green is a key part of that process.”

Next week the city will celebrate the rollout of its electric vehicle charging station pilot program. Electric vehicle stations have already been installed at Discovery World and the City Center parking garage at Mason and Water streets. This is part of an overall strategy to encourage residents to use alternative means of transportation and alternative fuels.

The event also featured a presentation from Lindsay Stevens Gardner, founder and executive director, Rock the Green. “It is an honor to be part of a community that positions itself as a national leader in environmental sustainability,” said Stevens Gardner. “As we prepare for Rock the Green 2012, it is clear that there is no better place to host a near-zero waste music festival than here in Milwaukee.”

In line with the City’s sustainability initiatives, Gardner shared several new innovative programs and festival features for Rock the Green 2012, including:

- **Wind power** will be introduced, in addition to other renewable energy sources that generated electricity at last year’s event, including biodiesel, solar and bike pedal power.
- **Energy-efficiency lighting solutions** will be showcased at sundown in the final hours of the concert. This new feature was made possible by a shift in the festival schedule, which will begin and end a few hours later than in 2011.
- **Participation for community pioneers in sustainability** will increase this year. In addition to interactive sponsor exhibits, a new area will showcase the missions of 10 local, environmental nonprofits.

The event also showcased several local companies whose sustainable best practices contribute towards Milwaukee’s environmental leadership. Veolia Environmental Services provided waste reclamation stations to collect recyclables, compostables and waste on-site. Additionally, attendees explored interactive booths from Me2, Milwaukee Shines, the Milwaukee Department of Public Works, MEE & Electrify Mobility, The Knick Salon & Spa, Veolia Environmental Services, and Rock the Green.

Guests enjoyed lunch from local food truck vendors served on compostable plates and napkins, and live music featuring Evan Christian, a 2011 Rock the Green performer.

Rock the Green, which takes place on September 15 in Veterans Park, is currently working to finalize its entertainment lineup, which will be announced in May.

### **About Rock the Green**

Rock the Green is a nonprofit that identifies ways to bring together world-class entertainment and programming that engages consumers and communities around sustainable practices and healthy lifestyles. Its three-fold mission is to Educate and Engage using technology as a medium that enables people to experience interactive demonstrations on how to incorporate eco-friendly practices into daily life and work, Enlighten to help make Milwaukee and the region a leader in sustainability and water-related technologies, and Entertain through a best-in-class event that integrates entertainment and sustainability. For more information about Rock the Green, go to [www.rockthegreen.com](http://www.rockthegreen.com).

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**About the Office of Environmental Sustainability**

The Office of Environmental Sustainability (OES) promotes both economically viable and environmentally sound practices, projects and initiatives. The Office works with City departments, the Common Council, area businesses, and academic, community, and workforce organizations, to save taxpayer dollars by reducing energy bills in city buildings and in citizens' own homes and businesses. The office also promotes cost-sustainable practices that improve Milwaukeeans quality of life, like green infrastructure solutions to better manage the city's storm water challenges.

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